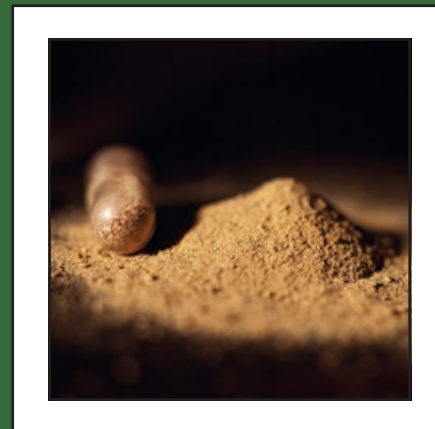
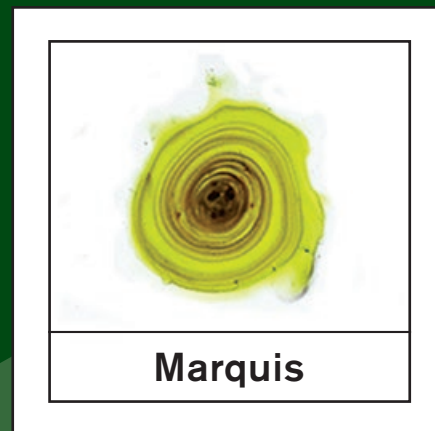
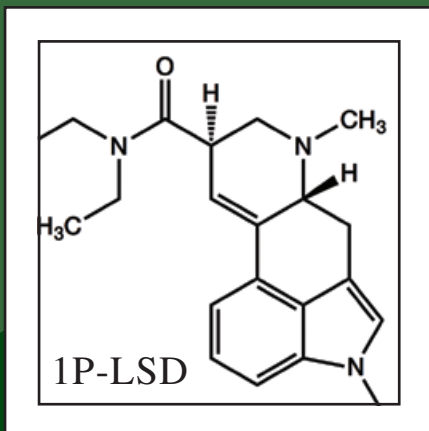
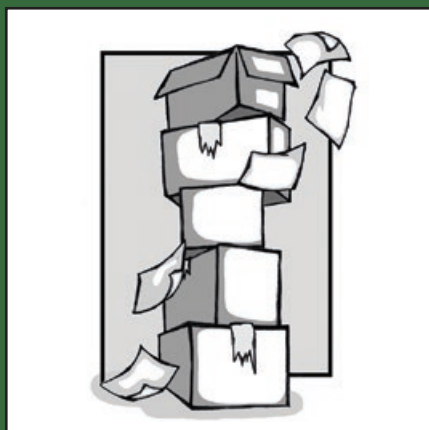


# Erowid Extracts

DOCUMENTING THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND PSYCHOACTIVES

August 2016

Number 29



Erowid's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary • Psychedelic Archiving • First Sapo Experience Report  
Novel Drug Briefs • Dream Tripping • Ibogaine Conference • EcstasyData!

## LETTERS & FEEDBACK

Wow! The "Shulgin Issue" of *Erowid Extracts* (#28) is phenomenal.

Thank you all for your contributions to make this a very special, important, and memorable issue! I am grateful to have a treasured copy to read and re-read. In fact, this issue is already helping me with my protracted grieving process, as I'm sure it does for countless folks who love Sasha.

— MUNKO  
*Erowid Supporter*

My reason for giving is just to say "thank you" for many years (probably over a decade) of incredibly useful information and a bit of entertainment. I was talking to a friend recently (while we did some light exploring) and we realized how valuable of a resource Erowid has been in our lives. I certainly don't visit like I used to, but I think it's time to pay back a bit of the debt.

— E.M.  
*Erowid Donor*

I applaud what you guys do. [...] I strongly believe sites like Erowid, Shroomery, and others with free public info are the best step taken so far to promote true drug awareness. However, it seems to me people are simply not getting easy information. [...] Let's face it, most people don't like doing research. Therefore I think the next step is to bring the info in a more accessible way like an app. A good one, available for people to check all info already known but easy and quick to navigate on the spot.

— T.W.  
*Email from content contributor*

I have no hard currency to donate to you, however your site helped me through the metaphoric minefield that is teenage experimentation. [...] I believe that people will do what they want regardless of laws, and even common sense oftentimes. The best we can do is provide the knowledge to do it safely.

— C.W.  
*Email from content contributor*

Your site was recommended to me by a friend, and it was love at first sight. [...] It's all good fun to read and watch videos about [drugs], but I knew I wanted to try them. Your website has allowed me to research and decide which ones would be right for me. I learned how to be safe, how to choose the correct dosage, and everything.

— H.  
*Email to Erowid*

You have continued for years to be the most reliable and complete source for information on psychotropic substances. My late uncle introduced you to me and I introduce you to my own children, now grown. Carry on!

— H.S.  
*Erowid Supporter*

Erowid may well have saved my life—and I'm certainly not alone in that. Having accurate, timely and non-judgmental information available to consumers of psychoactives is an often undervalued and dismissed public good. [...] No one is better than Erowid at providing that information to the people who need it, and if the organization had more resources, it could do that important work even more effectively. Thank you for being a resource for so many, and for so long—you are unsung heroes.

— ANONYMOUS  
*GreatNonProfits.org*

Erowid provides accurate, honest information about psychoactive plants and chemicals. No lies, no misdirection, no preaching. Erowid is exactly the type of service the world needs to stay safe, healthy, and informed.

— INCORRECTHORSEBATTERYSTAPLE  
*GreatNonProfits.org*

In a world run by information, Erowid yields their vast arsenal of it to the people. This is the kind of organization that truly exhibits the sort of vigorous generosity that we would hope for from a nonprofit.

— SAM 42  
*GreatNonProfits.org*

Thank you for being a stable rock in the tumbling waves.

— E.G.  
*Erowid Supporter*

On page 11 of *Extracts* issue 27, the sidebar declares that "58% of festival goers reported having used a psychedelic at an event".

While I agree 100% with the idea of providing a psychedelic support space at festivals [...] the data you have doesn't really support the claim that 58% of festival goers have used a psychedelic substance.

The problem is that the survey was conducted using visitors to the Erowid website. Such a survey will necessarily suffer from "selection bias", i.e. the people who visit the Erowid site in the first place are much more likely to be drug users [...].

So, to be clear; you could be correct that more than half of festival goers have used a psychedelic substance while attending a festival, but you don't have any statistically meaningful data to support this claim.

— YOUR FRIENDLY  
NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICIAN  
*GreatNonProfits.org*

*It's true that the survey was not of all festival goers and the Erowid-visitor-only bias got lost because of space constraints for a pull quote on an already small sidebar. Taken alone, the statement we featured could be misunderstood by someone leafing through the newsletter reading titles, subheads, and quotes. The oversize snippet was designed to draw the reader into the specifics of the survey described in the text. But perhaps it needed to include more context to leave an accurate impression.*

Send correspondence to:  
**extracts@erowid.org**

Please include a name, title, and city/state/country of origin to be published with your letter. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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Erowid Center's mission is to provide and facilitate access to objective, accurate, and non-judgmental information about plants, chemicals, technologies, and related issues that affect the mind, body, and culture. Erowid Center supports and trains libraries, publishers, and other information distributors on issues related to these fields.

It is also Erowid Center's goal to support medical, legal, scientific, academic, and independent experts in developing and publishing related resources.

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# Erowid Extracts

Number 29, August 2016

.....

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ISSN 1548-8071

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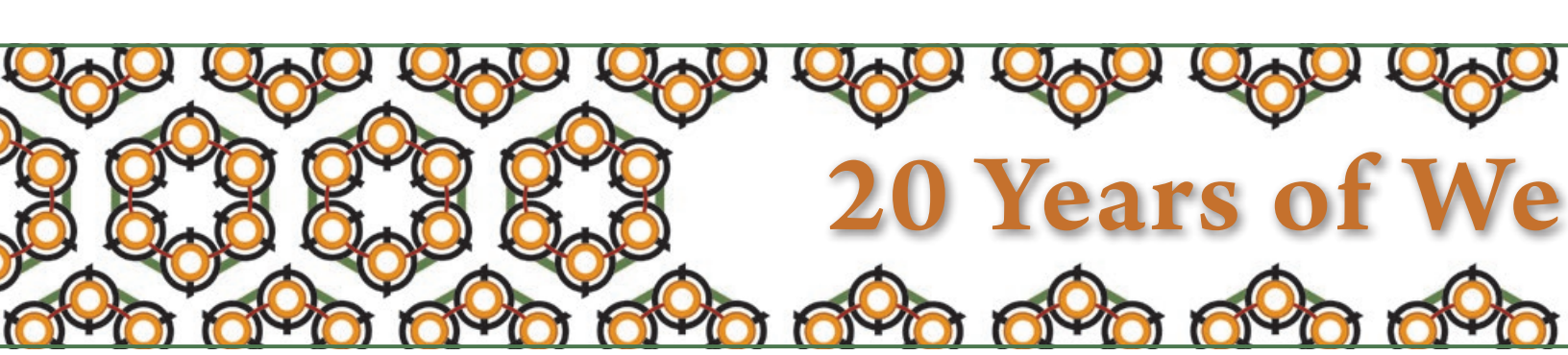
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.....

**Know Your Body**  
**Know Your Mind**  
**Know Your Substance**  
**Know Your Source**

.....





# 20 Years of We

**T**hough it began as a side project in 1995, Erowid rapidly became an immersive lifework for the two of us (Earth and Fire). It quickly moved to a 40-hour-a-week hobby and finally became an income-earning job in 1999, when we first asked for donations. In 2001, Sylvia Thyssen joined us, having already having worked at MAPS and DanceSafe. Then in 2004, JL started helping, after experience with drug policy

has developed online has become increasingly diverse and robust.

A big part of our first decade of operations was to nail down basic concepts that were not universally known and hadn't already been articulated online. We developed memes related to careful decision making and mindfulness. We helped popularize the idea that personal responsibility in drug use is not only possible, but should be the norm. Erowid recorded examples that disproved the representation by prohibitionists that all unapproved use is irresponsible abuse. We also worked to definitively knock down some of the false myths that persisted in the psychoactive-using subcultures.

**Know your body. Know your mind.  
Know your substance. Know your source.**

in the European Union. Between the four of us, we've collectively spent almost 80 years swimming in drug information soups.

### Many Goals Reached

2016 is Erowid's 20th year of operation! With only a few minor service interruptions in two decades, we've achieved one of our major goals: to facilitate reliable access to and

the evolution of information about psychoactive drugs, especially psychedelics. Erowid has been recognized widely as being part of the web's backbone of information about mind-affecting substances. And the community of drug geeks that

### Through the Looking Screens

Since we first started Erowid, the two of us have always sat at side-by-side desktop computers, with chairs about arm's length apart. Our "HQ Command Center" has lived in four different houses: a laundry room office in Woodside where Erowid began; a wood-heated hippy cabin in the coastal redwood forest on the crest of the mountains south of San Francisco where Erowid went full time; a rural, suburban storage palace in the foothills near Grass Valley; and now, a magical closetless wood-beamed cabin (and barn!) jammed into the side of a chasm in California's gold country.

Our monitor real estate has expanded from one large CRT apiece (in the mid-1990s) to three large LCD screens each and a seventh oversize screen to share.

With the need to stay connected to team members, contributors, supporters, and drug geeks around the world, we use dozens of different systems and services. We're constantly monitoring news, communications, drug-related



# ird—Eroweird

publications, and forums, as well as our own technical server systems. WWW, IRC, XMPP, SSH, Skype, SMS, Twitter, Facebook, POTS, ICINGA. Oh my! Our primary undertaking is managing the flood of info.

## The Tin Cup and the Waterfall

By mid-1996, we were already immersed in drug information overload. There were so many places where information was needed and yet most existing resources weren't accessible. When asked what it was like to run Erowid, Fire described a visualization that has stuck with us: We're standing in the midst of a torrential waterfall of information, flowing down on us from above. We're each holding a small tin cup, moving it around to try to catch the best, most important bits of information as they rush by.

There's a sense that we're constantly missing lots (even most!) of the interesting things in the streams of water, but there's always more on its way down. As soon as we hold out an empty cup, it fills up instantly with more information than one could ever hope to process, let alone understand or fully take in. But over time, as a species, working together, we can collaboratively improve our understanding of the data flowing by.

## Time Fractal

When we reflect on how long we've lived our lives installed in Erowid HQ, we're struck by how strange time is. The world is weird. And for those who've been paying attention, it's been weird for a very long time. Twenty years is the blink of a planet's eye, a femto second in the history of the universe, and yet it's half of a human's career.

So here we sit companionably, side-by-side in our healthfully ergonomic chairs, 10–12 hours a day nearly every

day, peering into the vastness through our wall of screens. Continuing twenty years of recursive post-post-postmodern anthropological documentary work that merges and swirls with the self-reflective fractal of consciousness.

## Plants, Chems, Practices, & Techs

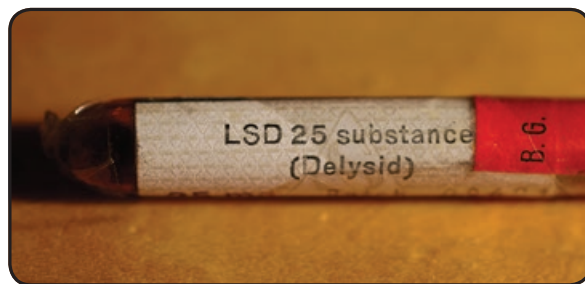
We study mind-altering tools and the people who use them. Once we scratched the surface of the topic of psychoactives, we

## Documenting the Complex Relationship Between Humans and Psychoactives

realized the inherent feedback loop: changes to thinking shift choices about the tools that changed the thinking in the first place. The next generation of tools is then developed following experiences that were shaped by the current ones. Drugs, identity, art, technology, science, law, society, spirituality, and mindful practices: they each affect the others and the process rolls on and in and up and down.

There's a surreality to studying psychedelics and the emanating fields of weirdness that reverberate throughout all layers of society. Everything is psychoactive. ●

— *Earth & Fire*





# Less Ecstasy, More Data

## 15 Years of the EcstasyData Program

by Earth Erowid

Year	Total Samples Tested	Unique Substances Identified	Uniques in "Ecstasy" Samples
2016 (Jan-Jun)	281	111	30
2015	528	134	51
2014	377	125	64
2013	224	83	59
2012	241	79	46
2011	241	52	32
2010	139	33	25

Over the past 15 years, Erowid's lab analysis project, EcstasyData, has tested thousands of submitted samples. We have expanded from testing almost exclusively "ecstasy" (MDMA) tablets to doing both field reagent checking with test kits and highly technical GC/MS identification of street drugs, research chemicals, and pharmaceuticals. In 2015 and the first half of 2016, the majority of samples submitted to our program were *not* substances that had been sold as "ecstasy", "molly", or MDMA.

The ongoing explosion of research chemicals—increasingly referred to as novel (or new) psychoactive substances (NPS)—and the prevalence of direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical sales make reliable analysis more important than ever. Even mainstream consumers are turning to lower-cost medications sold by online pharmacies. There is a huge global grey market for these tablets, powders, and blotter, which do not pass through the tightly regulated distribution systems designed to guarantee the purity and identity of drugs.

Moreover, dozens of substances are now available online in the form of pure white powders that are strongly active below 10 mg. Confusing such substances for MDMA, cocaine, or other higher-dose drugs can result in extremely unpleasant effects, serious injury, or death.

### Few Analysis Services

Despite the need, EcstasyData continues to be one of only a handful of public analytical drug testing programs in the world.

Only three major public lab analysis services accept samples by mail: Energy Control in Spain, our EcstasyData program in California, and the Welsh WEDINOS program (which

only tests samples sent from inside Wales). Excellent on-site testing programs such as SaferParty in Switzerland and CheckIt! in Austria do not accept submissions by mail, focusing instead on testing at events.

A few countries have good walk-in analysis programs, the best being the Netherlands' Drug Information and Monitoring System (DIMS). Samples can be brought in to one of their physical locations, with results available by phone in about a week. If the sample is a pressed tablet and matches another recently tested sample, results are provided immediately without having to relinquish the tablet. DIMS reports it had almost 12,000 samples brought in to its 28 locations for analysis in 2015.

### Current, Open, Privately Funded

EcstasyData releases results immediately and publicly. DIMS and other similar government-supported analytical programs do not publish their results contemporaneously. Instead, highly-abstracted summaries are published much later and never include the underlying data. Law enforcement agencies around the world test millions of samples per year, but almost all of that publicly-funded data is treated as secret and hidden from public view.

It is our belief that analytical data published immediately provides necessary real-world information to individuals and society about how frequently one substance is misrepresented as another or how often drugs contain contaminants. Unfortunately, with no government funding or advertising dollars, much of the cost of analysis must be paid directly by those using the service. Depending on the sample type, EcstasyData submitters pay between \$40 and \$150 of the roughly \$150 per-sample testing cost. Major ad companies such as Google have refused to serve ads on EcstasyData because it is "drug related" content.

We continue to be disallowed by the DEA from publishing quantitative results for anonymously submitted samples tested through the program.

## A Swarm of Substances

Despite these limitations, EcstasyData analyzed 528 samples in 2015, more than any previous year, and will test a similar number in 2016. Over the past five years, the number of unique chemicals identified by our program has grown—from 32 distinct substances in 2010 (with an additional 6 unidentified samples) to 132 unique substances in 2015 (with an additional 15 unidentified).

## Unidentifieds

One of the project's challenges is identifying the newest substances appearing in samples. We buy a new analytical reference standard nearly every week. Staying on the cutting edge in this way will cost the project \$5,000 this year. Our analytical standards are purchased from commercial labs such as Sigma-Aldrich and Cayman Chemical (currently the world's leading source of reference standards for NPS). Unfortunately, analytical standards are simply not yet available for many of the newest chemicals.

There are several ways to identify a drug without an analytical standard. Sometimes we use libraries of mass spectra such as those provided by Cayman, the Scientific Working Group for the Analysis of Seized Drugs (SWDRUG), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), or private individuals. We also get assistance from members of the Erowid Expert Network around the world, including some from law enforcement labs outside the US.

## Field Reagent Photos

In May 2013, we began publishing photos of field reagent reactions for each sample. Previously, we simply described the color changes that occurred when a reagent was dropped onto a speck of the sample. Happily, the motivated technician at our lab is willing to do the time-consuming

work of photographing reagent reactions for each sample, often taking multiple pictures to track color changes over time.

We've switched from photographing the reactions on a standard white ceramic surface to a transparent glass surface on a light-box, which makes the color stand out more in photos. For dark colors, the technician spreads or swirls the reagent and takes a second photo to better capture the reaction.

As of June 2016, EcstasyData is still the only lab analysis project that publishes field reagent reactions for each sample it tests. But, there are now some useful collections of videos and photos of field reagent reactions online. BunkPolice, a US commercial reagent vendor, teamed up with other groups, including Energy Control, to create videos of field reagent reactions for over 160 psychoactive chemicals.

## Blotter Analysis

For the last two years, we have tested blotter for the presence of LSD. In 2014, our lab developed a procedure to make it practical and time-efficient to positively identify LSD using GC/MS. We also added the Mandelin reagent, which turns purple in the presence of LSD. Though we have always accepted and tested blotter for DOx phenethylamines and the dragonfly compounds, the lab could not efficiently differentiate LSD from other ergoloids prior to 2014. These were necessary improvements to the project's harm-reduction efforts because NBOMe compounds, which carry substantial health risks, are now sometimes sold on blotter as LSD or "acid".

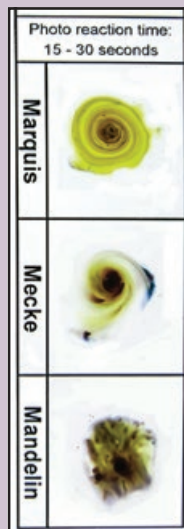
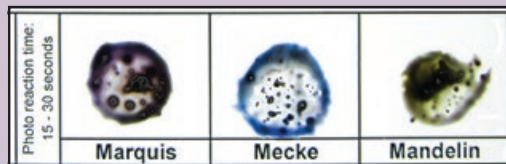
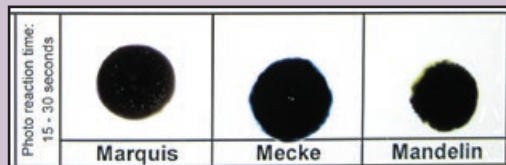
*The EcstasyData project is the only anonymous mail-in lab analysis project in the United States and has been conducting testing since 2001. Its annual budget is \$80,000 per year. Testing is done by Drug Detection Laboratories, a DEA-licensed lab.* ●



### "Supreme"

ID—4292  
Form—Tablet  
Date—Apr 2016

1 part MDMA



### "Powder (MDA?)"

ID—4081  
Form—Powder/Crystal  
Date—Jan 2016

10 parts Ethylone  
1 part MDA



### "Paul Frank"

ID—4365  
Form—Tablet  
Date—Apr 2016

4 parts caffeine  
1 part MDMA



### "Mushrooms"

ID—4078  
Form—Blotter  
Date—Dec 2015

1 part LSD

by Jennifer Dumpert

# Dream Tripping

The urge to play with consciousness is hard-wired into the human psyche. Little kids roll down hills to make themselves dizzy or press their palms against their eyes to create visuals. They spin in circles until the world tilts into an altered state of reality. They naturally transmogrify their experience of themselves and of the world before they form ideas about the legality or morality of doing so. Adults drink alcohol, take psychoactive drugs, dance themselves into trance states, and seek all manner of altered experiences from sweat lodges to meditation retreats. Even the most straight-edge teetotaler will try downhill skiing or a roller coaster ride for the adrenaline rush.

We have a smorgasbord of substances, technologies, and practices that can aid in our pursuit to play with our minds. And yet many ignore one of the best playgrounds we have: dreams. Dreaming is the original nonordinary mind state. It's also the one most universally experienced. Most of us visit bizarre, visionary worlds during the one-third of our lives that we spend asleep.

There are many reasons to explore one's dream life.

Perhaps you're looking for inspiration; artists and thinkers from Dali to Edison to Kekulé—who first accurately described the structure of the benzene ring—have harnessed the power of liminal dreaming for creativity and problem solving. Lucid dreaming has been used therapeutically for PTSD

sufferers to defeat nightmares or to allow people to have a conversation with someone who died before important things were said. Dreams have been used for foretelling the future and for astral travel. The list of purposes for pursuing dream work is long, but really, one needs no reason beyond a desire to play with one's consciousness.

As a member of Erowid Center's Board of Directors and a woman who has spent much of her 50 years on this planet considering the potential of psychoactive agents of all sorts, my interest in the exploration of mind states runs deep. In my youth, I gravitated toward obvious choices: herbs, chemicals, practices, and technologies that powerfully affected my experience of being. As I've become increasingly familiar with my own mind, as well as options for tweaking it, I've grown

**Dreaming is an easy, free, safe, legal, and effective way to experiment with consciousness.**

fonder of subtler allies. I used to favor things that clobbered me over the head with raw psychedelic power. These days, I like to put in more of the effort, to meet my medicines halfway. The effect is no less mind-blowing.

Dreaming is an easy, free, safe, legal, and effective way to experiment

with consciousness. I teach and write about dream work as a means of exploring mind. Someone recently called me a "dream tripper". It's a fine phrase. I have many ways to work with dreams, for similar reasons and to similar effect as other people do with their psychotropic of choice.

## Liminal Dreaming

You're likely familiar with liminal dreams, though you might not realize it. REM dreams tend to have a narrative structure where dreamers have subjectivity of some sort and a world around them, like waking life. Liminal dreams, which occur most often as one is falling asleep or waking up, don't have the same structure. They tend to be more free-associative. My current fave dream tripping involves hypnagogia, the transitional state moving from consciousness into sleep.

Most dream states are marked by consistent brain wave cycles, oscillations in frequency of the electrical impulses detectable with an electroencephalograph (EEG). In general, we sleep in cycles of 90–100 minutes, so if one manages to get 7½

hours of sleep, that's about 5 cycles in a night. Each cycle is marked by return to a waking or near-waking state, however brief. Most of us don't remember these awakenings. Brain waves, as measured by an EEG, look like a noisy, choppy wave pattern. They are measured in waves per second called hertz (Hz);



higher frequency waves are faster and lower frequency waves are slower. An alert mind generates a higher proportion of fast waves, called beta waves (13–30 Hz). In deepest sleep the brain produces more slow waves, called delta waves (0.4–4 Hz).

Hypnagogia, unlike the other sleep states, produces chaotic, inconsistent wave patterns. The brain shudders up through a series of micro-awakenings and then sinks down toward sleep, ricocheting between alpha (8–13 Hz) and theta (4–7 Hz) frequencies. The body twitches just like the brain waves do. Those little physical jolts, called myoclonic or hypnagogic jerks—sometimes accompanied by the feeling of falling—let the sleeper know that they’re in liminal dream territory.

Hypnagogia’s twin state, which happens when transitioning from asleep to awake, is called hypnopompia. This dream state meanders back and forth across thought and dream, remixing memory and imagination in a hazy, sometimes pleasant drift. Hypnagogia offers a kaleidoscopic swirl of images, thoughts, memories, ideas, and visions. I’ve spent much of my life yearning for a hangover-free, intense 15-minute trip. Now, through liminal dreaming, I’ve found it.

To give you a sample, while I was writing this, I closed my eyes for a few minutes on the couch. As I lay there, I let myself drift, entering into a light hypnagogic state, nearly asleep but also still awake enough to be aware. I had this liminal dream:

My hands create a visible but transparent glowing force field that takes shape around a magician’s valise. It becomes fabric in my hand, blows in the wind long and rippling, a river flowing through rocks toward the ocean, silvery and glittering in the sun.

Everything felt incredibly vivid and looked astoundingly beautiful. A sense of wonder accompanied the dream, along with a feeling like standing on a cliff with the wind in my hair.

Although “I” was in the beginning of the dream, the rest of it consisted of just images and sensations, like an interior monologue in technicolor.

To try this method of dream tripping, wait until you’re feeling a little sleepy. Get comfortable, maybe lie on the couch or sit back in a comfy chair. Then close your eyes and relax. Let your mind drift, but don’t fall asleep. You’re waiting for something, an image, an idea, maybe a distant sound. It may start as only a glimmer. Once it’s there, exhale into it.

As you breathe out, release any tension in your body. Focus your attention on whatever emerges, like watching something far away from you move toward you, taking on shape as it gets close enough to see in detail. Keep relaxing your body. Get as close to falling asleep as you can, but keep yourself awake by maintaining awareness on the liminal dream that’s forming in your mind. It takes a little practice to hit the sweet spot between being so drowsy that you fall asleep and so focused that you can’t drift off

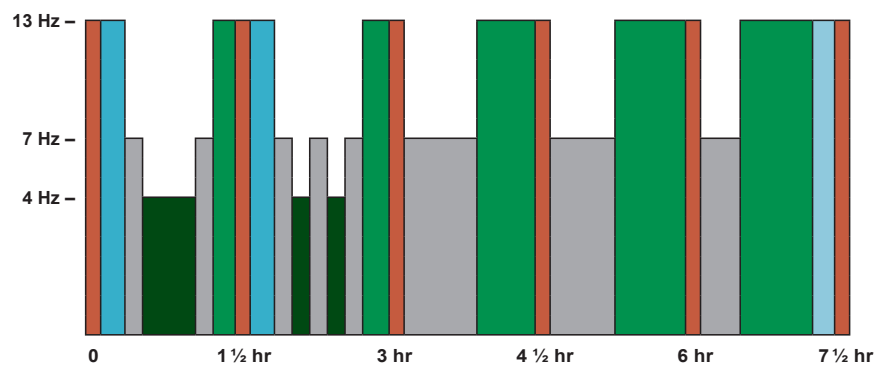
at all. But with practice, you can learn to linger in this altered mind state.

As a side note, while THC in its various forms inhibits REM dreams, it can enhance liminal dreaming. In fact, hypnagogic and hypnopompic dreams play well with many psychoactive substances.

## Lucid Dreaming

Lucid dreaming used to be a pretty esoteric concept but now it’s the subject of books, phone apps, and articles in mainstream publications like *Newsweek* and *Time*. At its best, it’s like being in a total virtual reality world, built from your own thoughts, perceptions, and memories. Sounds good, right? The problem is that, unlike liminal dreaming, attaining lucidity in a dream is difficult. Some people have spontaneous lucid dreams, but few are able to be truly (or even partially) lucid in their dreams with much regularity. If you want to get into it, you can find plenty of field guides, though some people report practicing techniques for years with disappointing results.

A simplified model for the timing of the stages of sleep, showing the associated brain wave frequencies. Although the rhythm varies from night to night and person to person, this illustrates the most common cycles of the sleeping brain.



□	Attentively awake (not shown)	beta waves	13–30 Hz
■	Stage 1: Relaxed, awake	alpha waves	8–13 Hz
■	Hypnagogia	shift from alpha to theta	4–13 Hz
■	Stage 2: 45–55% of adult sleep	theta waves	4–8 Hz
■	Stage 3 (& 4): Deep sleep	delta waves	0.4–4 Hz
■	REM: 20–25% of adult sleep, including dreams	irregular waves	8–30 Hz
■	Hypnopompia	shift from theta to alpha	4–13 Hz

## Oneirogens

I have a trick, a shortcut for improving dream recall and increasing the frequency of lucid dreaming. If you're interested in dream tripping and looking for a fast track, consider oneirogens. The word oneirogen is composed from the Greek roots *oneiro*—dream—and *gen*—to create. A variety of herbs, roots, flowers, scents, and practices are used to increase, alter, or suppress dreams.

I have been keeping dream journals for the last 36 years. One is a Twitter feed where, since 2009, I have posted a dream a day as @oneirofer. In 2010, I founded a group called the Oneironauticum. This group has explored a wide range of oneirogens.

On a predetermined night, people around the world try the same oneirogen in an international slumber party dedicated to consciousness exploration through dreams. Some participants, including myself, submit experience reports of their dreams to my site [urbandreamscape.com](http://urbandreamscape.com), where one can read dreams associated with various dream-affecting practices.

## Galantamine

I think the most effective oneirogen currently known for facilitating lucid dreaming is galantamine. An alkaloid derived from bulbs and flowers of various plants—the kind I take comes from red spider lily—galantamine is used in the treatment of Alzheimer's and other memory impairments. As a cholinesterase inhibitor, galantamine blocks the action of acetylcholinesterase, which breaks down the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. In so doing, it temporarily increases acetylcholine levels in the brain. Cholinergic systems are active in dream creation and recall and may also affect the likelihood of self-awareness in dreams.

Stephen LaBerge, one of the leading voices in the study of lucid dreaming, applied for a patent in 2003 on the method of using substances like galantamine

to promote lucid dreams. In 2008 I attended one of his workshops where he gave me galantamine. It worked for me, it's worked for Oneironauticum participants, and according to LaBerge it works for others, too.

Because galantamine is short acting, LaBerge recommends taking it five hours *after* first going to sleep, when the longer periods of REM sleep begin (see chart). He suggests 6–8 mg as a starting dose, compared to the 12 mg or more that Alzheimer's patients take daily.

Pick a night when you can afford to have your sleep cycle interrupted. Leave the capsules by your bed and set your alarm before you go to sleep. Wake up briefly to take your galantamine and go right back to sleep. I've followed this protocol with great success. Even if you don't achieve lucidity, you're likely to have amazing dreams.

In one galantamine-inspired lucid dream, I wanted to get out of the house but had no corporality. Without solid body parts, I couldn't open doors or windows. After trying and failing several times, it occurred to me that I could just pass right through one of the panes of glass. I felt the window slide

through me on a cellular level, squeaky, disruptive, incredibly visceral, and indescribably bizarre.

I captured another powerfully sensorial non-lucid galantamine-enhanced dream in a tweet:

Cleaning my brain in a basin of liquid. It clogs, life threatening. I hum low, vibrate the water like a blue whale would, clears clog. #dream

## Calea zacatechichi

One of the most celebrated oneirogens is a flowering plant traditionally used by the Chontal people indigenous to Oaxaca, Mexico, for the purposes of oneiromancy (divination based on dreams). The Chontal believe that dreams happen in realms beyond those we consciously perceive and that the contents of dreams can convey meaningful messages or prophecies. They further maintain that calea clarifies the senses so the dreamer can more clearly perceive insights and can bring them back into waking memory. Some people also use calea to induce lucid dreams.

Smoked or steeped into an astoundingly bitter tea, calea can produce intense sensory experiences. Dream reports include memorable tastes, vivid colors, and beautiful and unidentifiable scents. In a calea dream, I once read a long text, a notoriously difficult thing to do in dreams. It even had pink highlighting and notes in red ink.

A tweet about a calea dream of mine that featured surreal color and sound:

A thick, iridescent, billowing sheet of reality, like a soap bubble skin, emits a high pitched sound we can't hear but makes dogs howl. #dream

David, a remote Oneironauticum participant, describes one of his calea dreams, which also included sound, scent, and dramatic color:



*Calea zacatechichi*

Photo by Mauve

"I was at a party with lots of people dancing and playing music, fun pop music except there were also all these African drums. There was a beautiful girl with a long blue dress on. The dress was the most amazing color, a glowing, electric blue. [...] I decided to bring the girl a glass of punch and so I went to the punchbowl but there wasn't any left, but there was a bottle of something. I tried it to see if it was good. It was, but it tasted like Indian spices, which even in the dream seemed weird to me."

## Mugwort

In Korean tradition, mugwort hot baths or steams (mugwort soaked in water then poured over hot rocks) taken late at night are used to induce vivid dreams. Mugwort actually refers to several species of plants in the genus *Artemisia*. The oil contains thujone, the active ingredient in traditional absinthe. Although it can be made into a tea, the Oneironauticum group works with it as an olfactory oneirogen. I find that the scent of mugwort produces saga-length, minutely detailed dreams. It also improves dream recall. People interested in astral travel claim that mugwort can enhance the sensation of leaving one's body.

Our dream group makes pillows or sachets with this oneirogen. We add lavender to aid sleep and dried rose petals to counteract bad dreams. (These herbs are available at many health food stores.) Put the dried plant materials into a small, loose-weave bag (or even a sock) and place it near your pillow while you sleep. For extra oomph, sprinkle some mugwort essential oil onto the dried herbs.

One of my mugwort dreams:

Gang on bicycles injects my dog with poison, neighbor revives him with scented oil. Dog and I sit on swings, discuss death. Long epic #dream

## *Silene capensis*

Photo by HerbDocta



An Oneironauticum participant named Bridget, who rarely remembers dreams, had three memorable experiences in one night using a mugwort sachet she'd made in the evening before bed:

"In the first dream, I was outside on campus. A dog came running over, and then suddenly a bunch of dogs came. Then I realized that I was dreaming. I've never had that happen before."

"The second was tied to the fact that we'd all commented earlier on how beautiful tonight's night sky was. The dream was that the universe was a huge blackboard and I had white chalk and felt pressured to hurry and begin creating the universe once again, beginning with the stars [...]"

"In the third, a gold and white fish came swimming over to me and made eye contact and then flipped over to expose his wiry, black pubic hair. He wanted me to focus on it."

## *Silene capensis*

This flowering herb grows in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The Xhosa people native to that land use its root for their form of oneirography. They believe that *Silene capensis* facilitates communication with their ancestors, who provide guidance or prophecy. Traditionally, the powdered root is placed in water and then whipped into a foam, which is eaten. They call the root "Undela Ziimhlophe", which means "white paths" or "white ways".

Remarkably, this oneirogen seems to produce dreams that feature wise figures or teachers, as well as the color white. I've found that *Silene capensis*-enhanced dreams often seem more meaningful. Again, the effect is exemplified by one of my tweets:

Dripping goddess figure rises from the water, her hair full of stars. Raises her arms, the stars become peacock tail feather eyes #dream

Christy, also an Oneironauticum participant, had this wonderful dream at one of our events:

"A magic woman appeared in my dream blowing smoke over me and my sister. It was a ritual of some sort, and the woman was Native American [...]. As the woman blew smoke onto me, I went up into dolphin asana, the yoga pose where you're on your feet and your elbows. [...] I went up into headstand, then into one-armed headstand, then I levitated off of the ground."

In my opinion, dreaming can rival the aesthetic perceptual immediacy of psychedelic experiences. With practice, many people can learn to interact with dreams in ways that increase access to creative, visionary states. If you're interested in consciousness exploration, cultivate your dream life. Sweet dreams! ●



# NOVEL DRUG BRIEFS 2

Clonazepam • 2'-Oxo-PCE • 1P-LSD • 3-FPM

by The Erowid Crew

Erowid monitors and tracks new psychoactive substances (NPS) and novel pharmaceuticals. NPS (also called research chemicals or, improperly, “synthetic drugs”) often reach the public long before robust information is available about them.

In both 2014 and 2015, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime identified more than a hundred new NPS, not counting approved medications. This growth is due in part to advances in pharmaceutical development techniques, expanded marketplaces for psychoactive drugs, and consumers willing to test NPS on themselves.

The serious legal consequences associated with the classic prohibited drugs can make becoming an NPS guinea pig seem like a rational choice. Some of the brand new drugs are almost certainly useful, fun, and reasonably safe. But it is a long, slow process to determine the risks and benefits for each drug and assess their usefulness as recreational, medicinal, therapeutic, or spiritual tools.

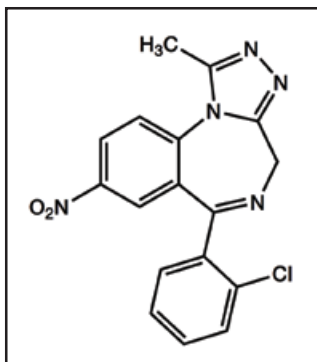
## Clonazepam

clonitrazepam

Clonazepam is a potent medium-duration benzodiazepine with effects described as somewhat more euphoric and sedating than many other benzos. It was first synthesized in 1971 and became available through online vendors around August 2015, following on the popularity of etizolam.

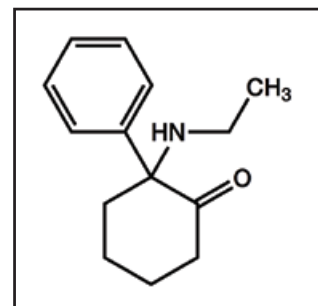
Its safety profile is not well established, but it seems to be both physically and psychologically addictive with tolerance potentially building more rapidly than other drugs in its class. There are reports of pronounced withdrawal symptoms after only three days of consecutive use.

Upon becoming widely available, some dosage guidelines identified a “common” dose at 0.5 mg, which is now considered “strong”. That may have contributed to some health and addiction issues, since it is often sold in small “pellets” (tablets) containing 0.5 mg. As with any drug that can be purchased as a pure powder and produces strong effects at below 10 mg, the relative ease of an overdose is a concern.



## 2'-Oxo-PCE deschloro-N-ethyl-Ketamine

2'-Oxo-PCE (also called O-PCE or 3F-MeO-PCP) is a dissociative in the aryl-cyclohexylamine class, similar to ketamine both structurally and in effects. It first became available through online vendors in mid- to late-2015, following other previously available dissociatives such as methoxetamine (MXE), methoxyphenidine (MXP), and deschloroketamine. Common single dosages are approximately 15–30 mg oral, 5–20 mg insufflated.



An Erowid experience report by delightfullydisturb (Exp 108524) describes the experience of an insufflated 5 mg dose (several hours after two 1 mg trials).

*T+0:00: I decide to go a bit deeper and weigh out ~5 mg.*

*T+1:00: I start feeling VERY sedated. It seems the stimulation I experienced earlier is only in low doses. [...] Moderate numbness all over the body and definitely some dissociation. My hands look tiny for some reason, and I find this hilarious. Wasn't expecting any visual distortions at such a low dose, but I just go with it.*

*T+1:30: I feel sleepy, so I turn everything off and go to bed. With eyes closed, I see much more movement and color than I normally do. Vague shapes that appear to be faces float around, and I feel almost like I am floating. With eyes open and lights off, I cannot see anything at all even though I normally can see a bit.*

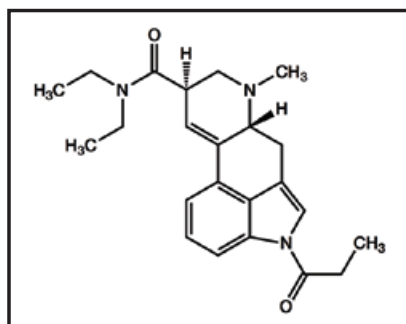
*I look for the light switch and turn it on. Everything looks slightly distorted but I can still see. Walking is somewhat impaired, almost like walking after a couple of beers. I go back to bed.*

*T+9:12: I wake up feeling still numb, I also notice what I to call 'morning tracers', something which I get every single time I fall asleep on dissociatives. Noticeable mood lift compared to my normal mood, positive outlook. I feel this one could be too addicting for me so I'll probably wait a week or two before exploring further.*

# 1P-LSD

1-propionyl-lysergic acid diethylamide

1P-LSD is a psychedelic in the lysergamide class. It first emerged in the UK in January 2015, just a week after the previously popular lysergamides LSZ and AL-LAD were scheduled there.



1P-LSD had no mention in scientific literature or history of human use prior to 2015. It has been sold on standard ¼" blotter squares ostensibly containing 100 or 125 µg each. At \$7–10 for a single hit or \$350 for a sheet of 100 hits, prices are competitive with other research chemical lysergamides and black market LSD.

1P-LSD has a structure similar to that of ALD-52, a lysergamide that may have briefly been available in California during the late 1960s (but which was not Orange Sunshine as is sometimes erroneously claimed). ALD-52 is thought to act as a prodrug for LSD and experimenters believe the same is true of 1P-LSD. The dose, effects, and duration of 1P-LSD are extremely similar to those of LSD and they appear to be nearly indistinguishable when compared in informal blind tests.

In October 2015, Brandt et al. described the presence of LSD when 1P-LSD was incubated in human serum, confirming a decades-old theory that acyl derivatives of LSD are converted to LSD in the body. That same month, after nearly 50 years as an obscure historical footnote, ALD-52 blotter appeared on the research chemical (RC) market.

MrMoran describes his 1P-LSD experience (Exp 106122):

T+0:00: *I put the tab on my tongue. At first there was a mildly salty taste [...].*

T+0:20: *Nothing in the head, but colors are just a touch brighter. The effects are not immediately apparent, but something is there. +/-*

T+1:10: *Colors are more intense and shift in smooth, clean, natural waves. I likened it to a tide rolling in; sometimes I felt more sober, and other times I felt more like I was tripping. The body load is pleasant and light. ++*

T+1:30: *Time begins to dilate. Visuals creep in waves. Everything looks clean and defined. [...]*

T+1:40: *I take another half tab (50 µg).*

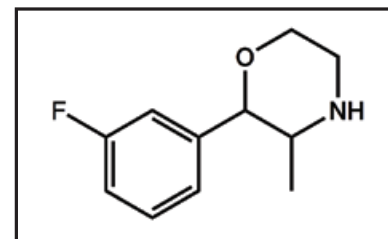
T+4:00-6:00: *This clearly felt like around the peak of the experience. +++*

*The things I'd heard prior to this were that it was indistinguishable from LSD, and for the most part, I would have to agree.*

# 3-FPM

3-fluorophenmetrazine

3-FPM is a stimulant first sold publicly in late 2014. It's an analogue of phenmetrazine, which was a popular prescription stimulant and weight-loss drug from the mid-1950s to the 1970s. 3-FPM is the first analogue of phenmetrazine to have been seen on the RC markets.



The addition of fluorine to phenmetrazine does not appear to have altered its character. Experience reports suggest it is a functional stimulant with mild euphoria. Some people describe a "ceiling effect" in which increasing the dose only minimally increases desirable effects. Heavy users also report that protracted, multi-dose sessions can cause concerning negative side effects and markedly extend the time between last dose and sleep.

As with many NPS, the aim of 3-FPM's development as a product seems to have been to avoid legal restrictions, rather than improving on the parent compound. Although its sale for human consumption is outlawed by many analogue acts, it is only specifically named in the laws of a small handful of countries.

Typical single dosages are 30–50 mg oral (a little less if insufflated), making it slightly more potent than phenmetrazine. As with many stimulants, people report experiencing "more-ishness" when using, especially when insufflated. There are many reports of heavy users of stimulants consuming up to a gram in a 24-hour session.

A report submitted by Freddy (Exp 105316) describes an experience with 29 mg of 3-FPM taken orally, followed by an additional 45 mg two hours later.

T+0:00: *Dose 29 mg in water. Tastes foul.*

T+0:20: *First signs of effects. Attention, alert and awake.*

T+0:40: *Added effect of a mood lift. No euphoria, clear stimulation.*

T+2:57: *Ingested an additional 45 mg. I had come down and felt baseline.*

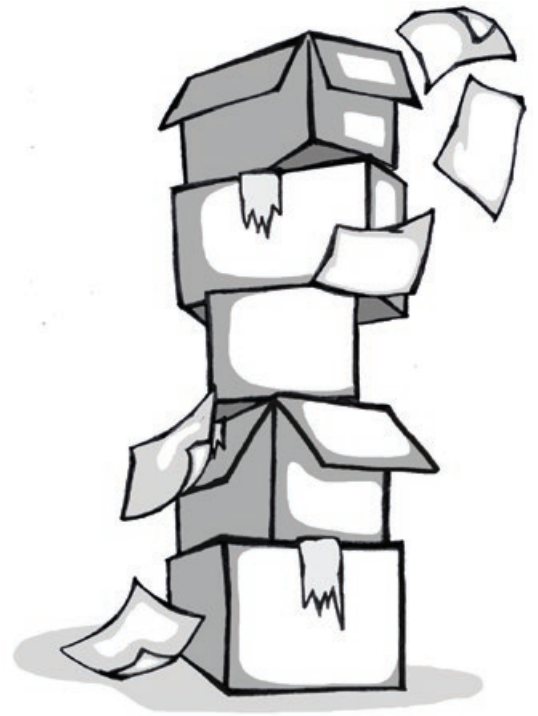
T+3:11: *Bang. All cloudiness, fogginess, and fatigue removed and mood lifted. It's like five strong shots of espresso without any jitter. Lifted mood substantially and lasted 1-2 hours, then resolved to a calm baseline.*

*It can be summed up as mood lifting, wide awake, kinda chatty. Very nice for studying, though I'll keep it to 10-30 mg. Anything above and it's stronger and shows a hint of euphoria. At 45 mg, my heart beats a little faster, I sweat more, I have tunnel vision, and my appetite is gone. ●*

# CARDBOARD BOXES ALL THE WAY DOWN



by Erik Davis



## exploring the archives of the counterculture

Though I have been interested in countercultural history for a long time, I have spent relatively little time working in and thinking about archives, where so much of the raw materials of “history” are stored. This year has been different.

Before taking a trip to New York City in February, I made sure to set up a visit with a bunch of boxes at the New York Public Library (NYPL). These hundreds of boxes contain the Timothy Leary papers, 1910–2009, which the Manuscripts and Archives Division purchased in 2011 and made available to researchers two years later. As a PhD working in the field, it was easy for me to get access to the archive. If you are an independent researcher and have a good spiel about a project, it’s not too tough to get your hands on these things. And if you are in New York, you should!

The Manuscripts and Archives Division is housed in a pleasant, old-school scholarly reading room, with plush

chairs and book-lined walls. I could only request a few boxes from the vault at a time, and staff held those behind the counter, doling them out one by one. Pencils only in the room, but I was allowed to take pictures of whatever I wanted.

Luckily the NYPL has made a pretty thorough catalog of the collection, and the Curator of Manuscripts, Thomas

What’s the difference  
between an archive and a pile  
of moldering cardboard boxes  
in a shed in the backyard?

Lannon, helped dig out particularly interesting items for me. One of my research goals that day included looking at Leary’s aggressive transformation of Walter Evans-Wentz’s early English translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* into the 1960 trip guide *The Psychedelic Experience*. One folder contained Leary’s heavily-annotated copy of the *Book of the Dead*, where

I could literally see *The Psychedelic Experience* begin to take shape in the margins of the earlier book, with the word “death” scratched out, and “ego loss” scribbled in.

### Leary in the '70s

Given my current research on “high weirdness” in the seventies, my main interest was in Leary’s second prison stint, when he received what he called the “Starseed Transmissions”. In a series of chapbooks and self-published texts, Leary turned his back on the hippie-Hindu mysticism of his '60s persona and embraced a futurist, proto-*Mondo 2000* worldview of sci-fi, spacefaring techno-optimism. In the boxes associated with this era, I found letters and texts that, though of only moderate interest in themselves, gave a strong sense of the range of Leary’s interests and attitudes at that time. This material included letters that made it clear to me that Leary had not really become a New Age channeler of E.T. information but was, once again, crafting a tactical mask.





Even more interesting was the correspondence that Leary's partner Joanna Harcourt-Smith received as a result of the numerous fundraising and concert efforts she organized to support Leary's release from prison. These folders were stuffed with envelopes and letters—often featuring cartoons or colorful designs—in which regular folks wrote in to express support for Leary, the influence of psychedelics on their lives, their fascination with outer space, and other topics that showed me a good cross-slice of psychedelic America at the time.

I realized then that while the Leary papers are obviously a gold mine to students of the old rascal, they are just as valuable as an impressionistic record of that counter-cultural era. Like a magnet, Leary attracted all sorts of attention, and because he was vain about publicity, keeping all the records of his ego's successful course through the world, researchers like me can now pore through a cornucopia of "signs of the times".

### Big Data

The exhilaration of delving into archives is often coupled with a state of information overload all too familiar today, a kind of claustrophobia, indecision, and exhaustion. What objects are the most valuable? Is this a key? The mind, even a mind used to thinking in terms of historical trends, boggles before so much raw material, so many questions that could be asked, so many rabbit holes to tumble down.

Archives are like the original "Big Data". Once they are gathered, the question becomes: what kinds of value can be generated from the material? This value is in turn directly related to what kind of questions one asks. In a sense there is always more than one archive, because what the archive "contains" reflects the different sorts of research projects (and wayward serendipitous wanders) that are brought to it.

### Piles of Boxes

But what's the difference between an archive and a pile of moldering

cardboard boxes in a shed in the backyard? I got to contemplate this question immediately after returning to the Bay Area from New York. I met up with my pal R. John Williams, a professor of English at Yale, and we went to visit a fellow in Sonoma County (north of San Francisco) who possessed such a shed. The boxes in question had belonged to a curious character named Kurt von Meier

You may get the answers you are looking for, but you always leave with more questions.

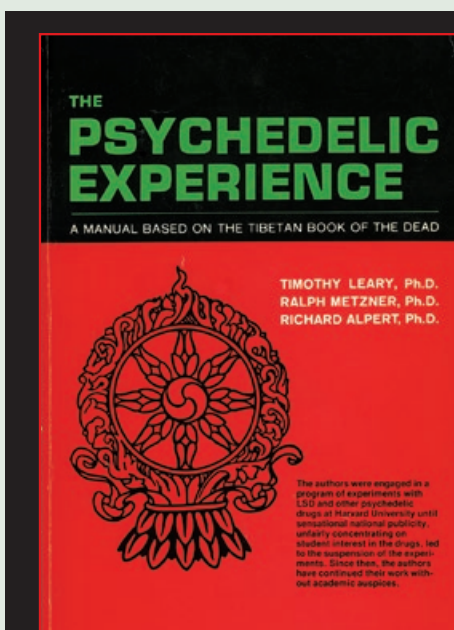
(1934-2011), a groovy pot-smoking art historian, renegade, and polymath who cut a fascinating swath through California head culture in its glory years, touching on Esalen, multimedia happenings, Tibetan Buddhism, and first-wave California cuisine. Interested in von Meier's connections with the British intellectual George Spencer-Brown, author of *Laws of Form* (1969), Dr. Williams was also on the hunt for von Meier's obscure mid-'70s, Castaneda-esque novel *The OMasters*—an unpublished text he

had learned about after sifting through a different archive in Champaign, Illinois.

This was not the New York Public Library. There was no catalog. Bugs, mold, and dust infested the boxes. It was a good lesson in the overwhelming *materiality* of analog archives, and their capacity to generate a "small infinity" of one damn thing after another. We didn't have enough time or resources to be anything close to systematic, but our scattershot efforts still bore fruit. We found moldy reel-to-reels with famous conversations recorded on them, a smattering of informative press clippings, and a possibly full manuscript copy of *The OMasters*. We also discovered a package addressed to Andy Warhol and stuffed with photographs of early Velvet Underground sessions. Amazing, but where did it fit? So back into a box it went. One thing that is clear about archives: you may get the answers you are looking for, but you always leave with more questions.

### Erowid's Cardboard Boxes

Over the years, Erowid Center has received a number of collections of physical documents, books, ephemera



*The Psychedelic Experience*, by Timothy Leary. 1964.



*El Perfecto*, 1973. Published to raise money for the Leary Defense Fund.



Flash, 1978, #3.



Head, April 1978, Vol 2(9).



High Times, Fall 1974, Vol 1(2).

and recordings. This is an important reminder of the mission of Erowid, which is not just to be an online resource for the most up-to-date information on psychoactive compounds, but to create and maintain a public “cultural memory” of psychoactive and psychedelic plants and chemicals, and the people and societies that have been changed by their encounters with them.

This sort of archival work is particularly important because many of the mainstream institutions that form and create archives have, for the most part, ignored countercultural materials, and particularly ones associated with drugs. This is changing of course, but Erowid Center has and will continue to play an important role in the archiving of modern and ancient psychoactive culture.

One of the things that can define an archive is whether it is capable of absorbing other people’s moldy old boxes of crap and transforming them into useful material. While lots of independent researchers, publishers, and heads have developed amazing personal collections over the years, few families or estates have the resources to maintain these materials in the wake of mortality. Often the collections get broken up and sold or, worse, lost, burned, or tossed away. To prevent this, some estates find institutions such as university libraries to house the materials. Or the collectors themselves decide to donate them before their death.

Erowid has received and processed some noteworthy materials, including large collections of papers belonging to Albert Hofmann and Myron Stolaroff. In both these cases, Erowid scanned the papers and, once they were digitized, returned the physical artifacts. Erowid has also received physical collections from researchers, publishers, and enthusiasts, and presumably more will keep coming in. Indeed, now that the baby boomer generation has hit its sunset years, many people will

be thinking about what to do with their collections; hopefully, some of the heads will remember Erowid!

Recently, I visited the temporary site of the Erowid Library. Fire and I went through some of the donated boxes that were piling up. The experience reminded me at once of the exhilaration and exhaustion associated with the other archives I have been to. One task was to process a dozen or so boxes of books that had belonged to Bob Wallace, a software pioneer, activist, and philanthropist who co-owned Mind Books, a mail-order bookstore offering publications about psychoactive plants and compounds. They had already been cherry-picked for their more rare and expensive items, which made them less exciting. But the thing about an archive is that it is tough to separate wheat from chaff, since part of the point is to keep materials that seem like noise, but that may provide signal to future researchers who are following questions and agendas we can’t yet imagine.

So, for example, the boxes contained dozens of sociological books from the seventies and eighties about the drug scene, some written by academics with an eye towards a popular audience, and others of a more technical nature. In some ways these texts, devoid of colorful writing or personal detail, are incredibly dull and seemingly useless for people interested in these questions today. But for historians tracking the way that psychoactive substances get re-imagined and redescribed over time, these boring books can actually be worthwhile—not only as a window into the drug scene of the times, but, perhaps as importantly, into how professionals thought about and wrote about these scenes.

The most fun I had during my day of archive spelunking at the Erowid Center Library was going through old issues of *High Times* magazine. Erowid had been gifted



several large sets of the magazine, and Fire and I carefully compiled these different collections into one master set, culling the duplicates for other uses and putting everything in order. I am enough of a nerd to enjoy the cataloging process itself, but I was really interested in the issues from the seventies.

My time spent with these goofy, colorful magazines was worth every minute of opening up crumpled boxes and sneezing at the mold. Along with some largely forgotten drug mags like *Flash and Head*, seventies-era *High Times* were a spore-print of a zeitgeist that for some reason I can't get enough of. I thrilled to articles about astral projection, the banana peel myth, and the Kif harvest in Morocco, and was surprised to come across intelligent interviews with Susan Sontag, William S. Burroughs, and the Dalai Lama, along with an editorial about outer space by Jerry Brown (as of 2016, California's longest-serving Governor). I learned that the slang term for psychedelic mushrooms in Mexico was *caca de vaca* (shit of the cow), and that some heads felt that the new sinsemilla strains coming out of Cali smelled pretty but gave pedestrian highs compared to the psychedelic exotica of Thai stick or the best Hawaiian.

The sixties and seventies were good years for magazines, and *High Times* had some great writers like Glenn O'Brien and Andrew Weil, and lots of editorial sass. But half the fun lies in the ads. After all, the magazine wouldn't be there if it

wasn't making money, and it was making money because people had a lot of drug-related materials to advertise and sell. These included a hilarious number of porno pipes, mannitol and other cocaine cutting agents, erotic coloring books, rolling papers, coke spoons, scales, t-shirts (with bra-free models, natch), and five-foot model pyramids made of opaque vinyl. The sly exuberance of many of the ads reflected a hedonism at once unhinged and strangely innocent in its pleasures.

Alongside the paraphernalia, however, the magazine was also more directly keyed than I would have thought to the much larger and very real world of the explicitly illegal drug trade. The round-up of news on busts and DEA activity seemed very thorough, while the Trans-High Market Quotations diligently collected worldwide prices for cannabis and any number of other desirable compounds, including Quaaludes, crystal meth, and PCP.

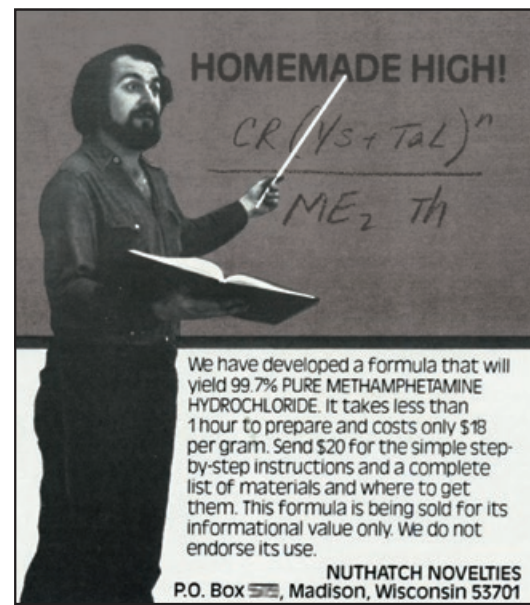


*High Times*, Dec/Jan 1975, #7.

Full y illustrated articles on the best smuggling planes and a myriad of true life tales in exotic locales suggested that, along with being a mix of *Rolling Stone* and *National Lampoon*, the magazine was also a bit like a stoned *Soldier of Fortune*, and that the true hero of 1970s drug culture was not the grower or dealer, but the globe-trotting smuggler.

### The Next Box

It's always nice to bank on future thrills, and I am happy that there are still boxes at the Erowid Center



Ad for methamphetamine recipe. *Head*, December 1977, Vol 2(5).

Library that remain unprocessed and uncatalogued. On top of some of the intellectual challenges associated with finding the best way to organize and sift through these materials, there's always the possibility of coming across rare and mind-blowing cherries to pick. An unpublished manuscript on a vital topic! A substantive letter with a famous signature! Lab specs! Drug porn! And if, instead, the material turns out to be dreadfully boring, you can always just shelve it. Next!

So, for the sake of cultural memory (and my own future thrills), I urge you to keep the Erowid Center Library in mind. If you own or know of drug-related archives—however small—please consider the Erowid Center Library when it comes time to pass them on. (This includes not only books, magazines, and articles, but what archivists call “ephemera”: posters, cards, ads, fliers, etc.) Or make a financial contribution to Erowid's digitizing efforts, which help ensure online access to such archives. Authors can also donate the right for Erowid to publish out-of-print books or articles online, even, or especially, texts now forgotten by history. Because history doesn't really forget—it just sticks everything in a box somewhere. ●



# BOX, PAPER, SCANNER

## Archives at Erowid



by Fire & Earth Erowid

**E**rowid is, fundamentally, a library. Archiving documents for the public is an important part of what we do. Within a year of starting the site in 1995, collectors of drug-related data began offering their content to be incorporated into Erowid.org. Some people's interest had waned and they wanted to hand their work off to someone they trusted to keep it going. Others wanted to participate by adding their collections of data to a larger "library".

In the late 1990s, little of humankind's printed knowledge was available digitally. The Erowid site began with academic tidbits, digitized clippings, and community knowledge about psychedelics, collected informally. We and our drug geek colleagues spent countless hours in university libraries photocopying obscure but important articles out of old journals and books. Texts were scanned manually on flatbed scanners and OCR'd, or typed in by hand if OCR was impractical.

### Books

Even before Erowid had a name, we were collecting books, papers, and geeky ephemera about psychoactive plants and drugs. In 1998, we had 150 related books. In 2000, Erowid's first benefactor, Bob Wallace, thinned



out his personal library and gifted us with twenty boxes of books and periodicals. He had decided, among other changes, to retire his collection of prurient anti-drug, pulp scareographies, resulting in the addition of Reefer Madness-style fiction and nonfiction to the Erowid Library. Our physical library has since grown to more than 1,500 titles.

### Digital Collections

In 1999, we took over the Hyperreal Drug Archives, a curated and lightly-edited collection of more than 1,700 documents. In addition to merging it into Erowid's main online library, it was the first large collection we kept

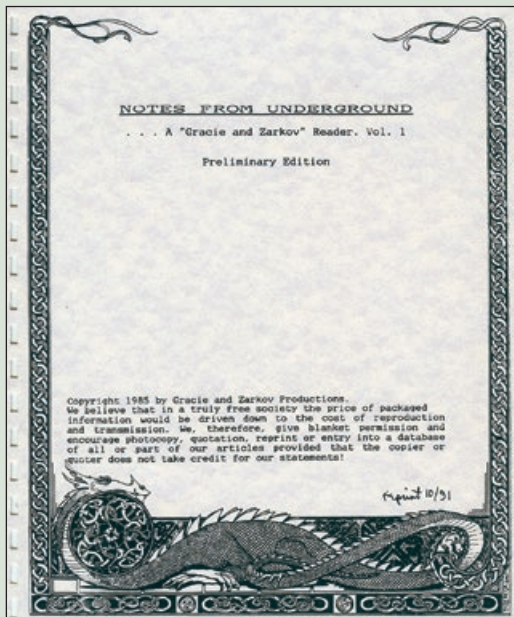
archived as a historical snapshot. In the early 2000s, we added several other collections, some of which came to us digitally, others in print.

As colleagues retired from or stopped maintaining their web presence, they asked us to archive their web content for posterity. These included "Diary of a Psychonaut", "The Sonoran Desert Toad" collection, Rhodium's Chemistry and Pharmacology archive, and a snapshot of PoppySeedTea.com, a site created by the mother of a young man who died in 1986 from drinking poppy seed tea.

### Physical Collections

The first physical collection we digitized was the 4,000-document Albert Hofmann Collection, which we scanned and databased with funding from Bob Wallace. This collection includes a surprisingly complete array of research documents about LSD and other psychedelics from the 1950s through the 1970s, most previously unavailable online. The physical collection was returned to Switzerland after rebinding and the digital version archived publicly on Erowid.

We first visited Sasha and Ann Shulgin at the Shulgin Farm in 1999. Their enticing library included lab and pharmacology notebooks that formed the basis for their books *PiHKAL* and *TiHKAL*. At the time, they felt there were still too many privacy issues to make the materials public. Sasha allowed friends to peek through these notebooks but not to scan or photograph them. Then, in 2006, the Shulgins agreed to let them be scanned by trusted assistants and





the Shulgin Collection at Erowid was established. Erowid volunteers took on the laborious job of transcribing hundreds of pages of difficult-to-read chemistry-related texts. The work by Team Shulgin and Erowid to document Sasha and Ann's work continues. *Erowid Extracts* #28 (February 2016) was dedicated to this project.

In 2009, Myron and Jean Stolaroff offered Erowid their collection of somewhat moldy boxes full of documents related to psychedelic psychotherapy to digitize and archive online. In 2014, we completed cataloging the 5,000 items in the Stolaroff Collection and, as of July 2016, we're halfway through the process of writing short abstracts for each. We're excited about the added utility that these abstracts will provide to what could otherwise be a daunting set of personal communications and published articles. The tidied physical papers may now be heading to Stanford University for long-term storage.

Recently, well-known author Michael Pollan, who is working on a book touching on 1960s psychedelic history, asked us if the Stolaroff Collection contained any original documents related to Al Hubbard, an important figure in 20th-century psychedelic history. Our search for "Hubbard" in the collection pulled up 185 related documents, most of which we provided to Pollan to aid his research.

## The Hive

It may be less obvious how historical snapshots of defunct websites fit into the big picture, but they are an important part of the Erowid library. They are generally more recent, and more easily mined than stacks of yellowing paper, but just as valuable for the evolution of knowledge and the historical record.

In 2015, we were approached by drug geeks who had a complete archive of the long-defunct and controversial website, "the Hive". The Hive was an influential web forum discussing the chemistry of mind-altering compounds. Its frank, explicit discussions of synthesis and extraction made it one of the most infamous psychoactive-related websites of its era, attracting US



national television attention. The forum was started in 1997 and by the time it went offline in 2004 (due to hosting issues), it had developed an international community of more than 8,500 active users and half a million posts. Erowid launched the first complete snapshot of the Hive in September 2015, after removal of private information such as passwords, email addresses, and private messages.

## Boxes of Stuff

Perhaps the least known archiving work we do is processing small one-or-two-box collections of drug-related books, papers, and "stuff" contributed by individuals. Whether it's a former

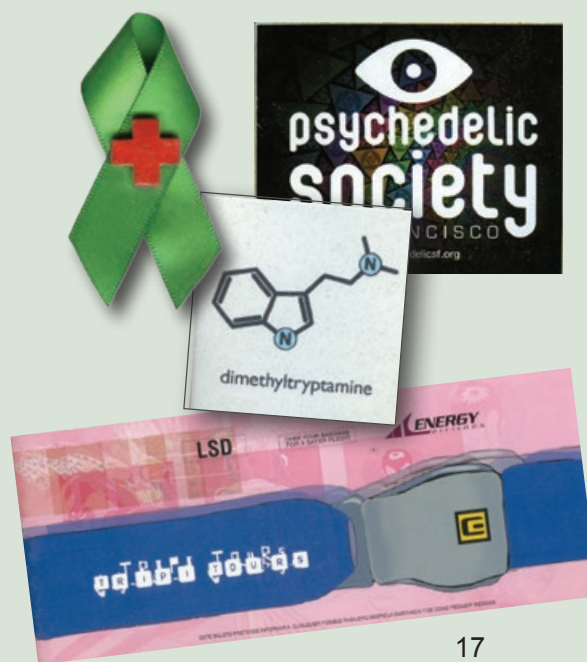
publisher or author, the family of a deceased enthusiast, or a drug geek cleaning out their closet, lots of people want to see their invested time and money be useful to others.

Contributions of books related to psychoactives are incorporated in several ways. If the book isn't already in our slowly growing library, we catalog and add it. Duplicates are offered as educational thank-you gifts to book-collecting donors, helping them build their own libraries.

The ephemera stuck in the corners of donated boxes is often as interesting as the books: advertising from conferences, product packaging, drug containers, festival fliers, pins, stickers, etc. Curious artifacts can enliven otherwise dry collections of materials, documenting the vibrant culture and subcultures that surround psychoactive drugs.

Erowid is part of a long lineage of people working to further the field of psychoactive drug-related knowledge. As contributors to this wisdom tradition, we preserve and evolve information about mind-altering substances, practices, and technologies. ●

Images: 1) Gracie and Zarkov's 1985 collection of experience reports, *Notes from the Underground*. 2) Larry Todd's 1974 *Dr. Atomic's Marijuana Multiplier*. 3) The earliest LSD paper in the Hofmann Collection, from 1947. 4) Archived version of The Hive at Erowid. 5) Psychedelic Ephemera.





# The First Sapo Experience Report

Photo © Joachim S. Müller

The 2015 book *Sapo in My Soul: The Matsés Frog Medicine* is the unlikely story of how a curious former New York City chef authored the earliest-known, first-person experience report about the effects of *Phyllomedusa bicolor* secretions in humans, helping to bring global attention to a frog venom with unique medical and psychoactive properties.

In mid-1986, investigative journalist Peter Gorman was pointing at objects in the home of Pablo, a Matsés curandero (traditional healer) he'd just met, seeking to learn the tribe's words for various items. As Gorman motioned toward a small plastic bag hanging over a fire, Pablo excitedly pulled a stick from the bag—and spat on it.

"I had no idea what it was but I was not particularly afraid, because the night before we had done nü-nü, a [tobacco-based] snuff, and that hadn't hurt me", Gorman recalls. "And my guide Moises knew these guys and he didn't object, so I thought, 'Well, whatever he's doing is going to be interesting.'"

Pablo briskly mixed his saliva on the stick, forming a light paste, and then retrieved a twig from the fire.

"He grabbed my left arm—I couldn't pull it away—burned me twice, quickly scraped away the skin, and put the paste he made onto the exposed subcutaneous layers of flesh", Gorman says.

Moments after the paste—reconstituted secretions of the bright green Amazonian tree frog *Phyllomedusa bicolor*—was applied, Gorman was thrust into hell.

"In about 15 seconds, my heart began to beat faster, my pulse seemed like it was going faster, my blood seemed to rush, I got very warm", he says. "At 30 seconds, I was very uncomfortable. I was hot and this was really making me sweat. I turned to Moises and asked, 'All right, what is this?' In the jungle region, Moises knew everything."

Despite having in-depth, first-hand knowledge about the activities and traditions of countless tribes in the region, Moises knew nothing about the stick in Pablo's hand.

"Sapo, Petro, sapo", the curandero whispered, adding to the confusion.

"I had no idea what he was talking about—'sapo' means toad in Spanish", Gorman says. "Within five minutes, I started to convulse and throw up. I got down on my hands and knees because I couldn't stand anymore and I wanted the coolness of the clay against my forehead."

He collapsed on the ground.

"I felt my heart was going to explode; I thought my head was going to explode; I thought I was so hot my brain was certainly fried. It was a terrifying experience."

As he writhed in agony, 20 kids from the village started kicking him as though he was a dying animal, like, "Hey, is he dead yet? Can we put him on the spit or what?". Gorman described thinking "Oh my god, they just poisoned me, I'm dying, and they already want to put me on the goddamned fire. I've seen them put animals on the fire—they put animals on the fire while alive. I do NOT want to be put on the damn fire."

Gorman awoke in his hut alone and with no one nearby. But he could hear people speaking in a normal tone. Then he realized he was hearing two women who were 50–70 feet away.

"I thought, 'That's extraordinary! What the heck's going on here?' And I looked around and into the trees to my left and saw some small motion, but not at the edge of the trees. It was as if I was seeing through the trees and there was motion in the inside. I realized, 'Hey there goes a small band of monkeys', and I could hear them as

Stretching the frog to collect its secretion. Photo by Larry LaValle.





well. This was not normal. And when I went to stretch, it seemed like all of my muscles responded. Not just a normal stretch, but as if they were ‘RRRRRR!’ I felt like, ‘Whoa, I’m hearing better, I’m seeing better, I’m a strong motherfucker!’ It sort of blew me away—and I hadn’t died and they hadn’t put me on the fire.”

The perceptual change wasn’t like seeing another dimension on ayahuasca. But it reinforced his awareness that we are missing out on something—many things—if we don’t take seriously indigenous people and their knowledge. At the time, Gorman had no idea that his description of the ordeal would be the world’s first published sapo

‘I’m glad you did it. But I didn’t mean to be No. 1; I wasn’t trying to steal your thunder.’ My job as a journalist is to jump in the frickin’ water.” (None of those anthropologists shared with Gorman details of their experiences or described having taken sapo more than once.)

Back in New York, he shared his sapo experience with, among others, his contacts at the American Museum of Natural History, and approached the consumer publishing world.

Gorman returned to Peru several months later in 1986 on assignment for *Penthouse* to write about the Matsés, a feature for which the magazine flew in noted photographer Jeff Rotman.

The full report (121 pages on language and names, photo opportunities encountered, and a list of artifacts collected for the museum) of this trip includes Gorman’s second experience of using sapo:

“While [Pablo] is gone I receive a single shot of sappo [sic] in my left forearm. They will give me no more as the women remember my bad reaction last time and are apparently afraid I might not return ... Why have I done this drug again? I thought I would die the first time and now am sure of it ... I was not nearly as removed as the first time, in all [likelihood] attributable to having done half the amount.”<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, *Penthouse* prepared for its exclusive story from “The Real Life Indiana Jones”—that’s how they teased it in the issue preceding its intended publication. At the last minute, the story was cut because, as Gorman later learned, publisher Bob Guccione expected a cannibal tale. Gorman admits he likely used the word “cannibalism” during his pitch to the magazine, either metaphorically or in the context of an anecdote he’d been told during an earlier visit to the Matsés—a tale which, if true, would be an exception since the Matsés

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## “Why have I done this drug again? I thought I would die the first time...”

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experience report. “That wasn’t in my head at all ... I was just thrilled I had something to share”, he says.

Earlier explorers had shared second- and third-hand tales of “kambô”, which is synonymous with “sapo”—the word used by the Matsés for the *P. bicolor* frog, its protective secretions, as well as the acts of capturing and milking it (herein, “sapo” is used solely in reference to the animal’s secretions)—but it seemed little more than a myth, another curious entry in the anthropological record, until Gorman let the frog out of the bag by sharing his account with researchers, scientists, and mass media worldwide.

“I had feedback from [a few] anthropologists who said they [tried sapo] and hated me because they were going to write about it when they retired”, Gorman says. “But because they were anthropologists, they couldn’t admit that they [got involved in the peoples they were researching]. And my feeling was,

A 1925 French article by Constant Tastevin published in *La Géographie* might be the first to have described the effects of sapo (campon), in the context of use by indigenous people in South America. (Translated by Erowid.)

“*The amphibians are legion. Most notable is the campon of the Kachinaua people, or the bakurúru of the Túpy. The Kachinaua, Kurina and Kanamari tie it up alive, limbs splayed, and hold it over a fire.*

*Its body oozes a secretion that is collected on small sticks and saved. Then they release the poor animal, for if it were to die the goo would take revenge on its tormentors. When a native falls ill, becomes thin, pale and swollen; when he has long been unlucky in hunting, it is because there is an evil force in the body that must be expelled.*

*Early in the morning, before dawn, while still fasting, the sick and the unlucky have small scars made on their arm or stomach with the red-hot tip of a brand and then inoculate themselves with the “milk” of the toad, as they call it.*

*They are soon seized with intense nausea and diarrhea; the evil force exits the body by all the orifices: the sick man gains weight and regains his color; the unlucky one encounters more game than he can bring back; not one animal escapes his keen eyesight, his ear perceives the slightest sounds, and his weapon does not miss a single target.*

*I attended one of these cleansings among the Kurina, at the headwaters of the Erie, among the Zuwohi-Madihá (weeper capuchin monkey): the patients took the “campon” around 5 am, some of them for fun; at 7 am they were fully recovered, and at 8 am, one of them went out hunting and returned with just one jacou [game bird].”* ○

do not generally have cannibalistic tendencies.

Yet, Gorman's sapo story would get out. The earliest-known publication of his sapo experience report came in August 1987, appearing simultaneously in two foreign editions of *Penthouse* ("Mein Trip Mit Dem Jäger Tumi", German; "Visioenen Van Een Jacht", Dutch). Australian *Penthouse* was quick to follow with "Into the Mystic" (Oct. 1987), the story's first English-language publication.

## Enter the Scientist

"The American Museum of Natural History would take reports like mine, from what I understand, and disseminate them to people who were interested in that field", Gorman says.

Dr. Vittorio Erspamer, a pharmacologist working with the FIDIA Research Institute for the Neurosciences at the University of Rome, had been investigating peptides in amphibian skins (including *P. bicolor*) for decades<sup>2</sup>—always believing they could be beneficial for medicine, but lacking literature sufficient to justify using the material on humans.

"So when I gave the museum my information about using sapo, I believe, but I can't swear, that someone in the museum, knowing [Erspamer's] interest, got that to him. Then he made contact through a third party saying, 'Whoa, whoa, whoa! You did this? You're alive? Can I have some?'"

In 1988, Gorman returned from Peru with *P. bicolor* secretions in the typical Matsés form—collected and dried on a stick—and provided samples to Charles Myers, curator of the American Museum of Natural History's herpetology department, and Erspamer.

More than 50 years earlier, in 1937, Erspamer discovered a new amine, which he named "enteramine" (5-hydroxytryptamine, now known as "serotonin"). That contribution was significant in many ways, but especially so in relation to understanding essential functions of the human brain and how brain chemistry is affected by psychedelics. "If neuroscience can be said to have a beginning", wrote Dr. David Nichols in the spring

2013 *MAPS Bulletin*, "one could argue that it occurred in 1954, with the idea that the action of LSD might be related to its effects on the brain serotonin system".

Like all of the greatest scientists, Erspamer was ahead of his time. "If anyone already had samples, it would have been Erspamer", Gorman says. "I do think he looked at *P. bicolor* [in earlier research], but that it didn't grab his attention as much as some of the others."

Those others, he believes, included *Phyllomedusa sauvagii*—which contains dermorphin, a peptide also found in sapo that has analgesic properties and is

estimated to be 30–40 times as potent as morphine—and some *Dendrobatidae* species poison-dart frogs.

Months after receiving Gorman's sapo, Erspamer reported that it consisted of up to 7% peptides by weight: dozens of different peptides, at least seven of which are bioactive. "No other amphibian skin can compete with it", he wrote. With his interest growing, Erspamer arranged for a doctor he trusted to visit Gorman at his Manhattan apartment.

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## The earliest-known publication of Gorman's sapo experience report came in August 1987...

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"The doctor did tests, I did sapo. He had me hooked up to an EKG and different things were strapped to me and he was talking to Erspamer [on the phone] at the same time. So Erspamer knew the tests were done and that I didn't just make this shit up."

As a result of Gorman's story, Erspamer had more to work with than just hypotheses about the effects of sapo's peptides. Erspamer asked Gorman for a detailed account of his sapo experience, which would become the basis of the first peer-reviewed report investigating whether the chemistry of *P. bicolor* secretions could explain the effects described.<sup>3</sup>

"And the answer was yes, they could explain every aspect except for the point at which it felt like a frog was moving through me in the throes of it all", Gorman says. "[Erspamer] believed those were hallucinations, maybe brought on by my use of nü-nü at a similar time. But the increased heart rate, the sweating, the feeling of strength, satiation, not being hungry, not being tired for a couple of days, all of that was explained by the peptides in the sapo, once he broke it down."

In the course of his research, Erspamer administered sapo to twelve end-stage cancer patients to see if there was any noticeable benefit, specifically whether

Pablo liquefying sapo prior to self-administration. Photo by Jeff Rotman.







Pablo showing recent sapo burns. Photo by Jeff Rotman.

two of the prominent peptides would eliminate their pain.

“If Erspamer himself wasn’t dead, I wouldn’t even mention this because I want no one to besmirch him”, Gorman says. “But he knew what a dying cancer patient looked like—and these people were due to die that day—he admitted to me that this was their last chance.”

Nine of the patients died within 24 hours of being given sapo and three patients lived pain free for a few more days before succumbing to cancer, Erspamer wrote to Gorman after the experiment.

Gorman is emotional when sharing what he hopes will come from his chance encounter with sapo and the subsequent scientific developments, having clearly thought about the matter for decades.

“My mother, with end-stage cancer, was on a morphine drip 24 hours a day; basically in a drug-induced coma. “Imagine if my mother had been allowed to experience her last month totally awake and without pain, to tell us the stories that she was saving for the last day... and if we could tell her what we wanted to tell her... What if she could have been walking around for those last 30 days, making food, washing floors, having a piece of cheese and a glass of wine in the backyard, aware, ‘Yeah, you’re dying now. Enjoy the sunset, motherfucker.’ To me, that seems like such a gift.”

Researchers have continued the search for medicine in sapo, its

isolated peptides, and derivatives, including work being done by some of those who were around Erspamer and are now with pharmaceutical companies.

The bradykinin peptide found in sapo is among the most promising, as it appears to be able to piggyback other chemicals safely through the blood-brain barrier (BBB). Some drugs cannot cross this barrier. If the bradykinin peptide could reliably be used to deliver drugs through the BBB, it would be a valuable medical discovery. Researchers are looking at whether this could result in more effective treatment of Alzheimer’s disease, brain cancer, and countless other ailments.

“Sapo might just be the very beginning of exploration”, Gorman says. “There might be 1,000 amphibians out there with tons of material that can help us. But we needed to start somewhere, with somebody saying, ‘I did this and I didn’t die.’” ●

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## In the 30 years since

Gorman first experienced sapo, he’s maintained a close relationship with the Matsés and their unique medicines. He married an indigenous woman, Chepa, with whom he raised three children (their experiences with frog sweat are chronicled in a chapter of *Sapo in My Soul*). For three years, he ran a bar in Iquitos, Peru, about which he’ll gladly share countless amazing tales.

Even now in his 60s, Gorman returns to Peru multiple times a year to guide, with his Matsés colleagues, diverse international groups through immersive, deep-jungle excursions that often include traditional ayahuasca, sapo, and nü-nü ceremonies.

The decision to finally write a book about sapo was spurred by a desire to clear up misinformation about the medicine; share best practices on collecting the frog and its secretions, as well as administering and using it; and advise on the impact of the booming interest in this magical amphibian.

“There are Brazilian tribes that are claiming intellectual property rights for any future medicines [derived from sapo], and that would cut the Matsés out”, Gorman says. “I don’t think that’s fair. I want to set the record straight.”

In concert with the thriving ayahuasca tourism in Iquitos, demand for sapo is greater than ever. There are certainly sticks being sold that contain no sapo whatsoever. Gorman has personally tried sapo from at least a dozen non-Matsés sticks and says none provided any of the recognizable effects.

And in recent years, hundreds of people have taken courses in Brazil to become “certified” sapo practitioners—many returning to the US to open their own practices. Even as sapo sticks appear to be increasingly available, there may not be enough genuine, potent sapo to meet global demand. ●



# 2016 Global Ibogaine Conference

by David Bey

On March 14–16 of this year, experts, activists, and enthusiasts interested in the African plant medicine ibogaine gathered in the town of Tepoztlan, Mexico, to attend the 5th Global Ibogaine Conference. They came to share, lecture, discuss, bicker about, and celebrate the miraculous effects of *Tabernanthe iboga* on the nervous system of mammals—especially those mammals happening to be addicted to opiates or other drugs.

Iboga is used as a sacrament in Gabon by members of the Bwiti religion, who reputedly learned of its use from rainforest Pygmies. Everyone present at the conference, however, was ultimately there because of Howard Lotsof, who in 1962, as a young man, accidentally discovered that after taking ibogaine he was no longer addicted to heroin. Lotsof spent

the rest of his life pioneering the use of ibogaine to treat addiction and organizing an international community dedicated to this goal. The first Global Ibogaine Conference, in 2007, was held in his honor. He passed away in 2010, survived by his radiant wife Norma Lotsof.

The previous Global Ibogaine Conference, held two years ago in Durban, South Africa, boasted about thirty participants. This year it attracted over 250 attendees, and was quite possibly the largest conference dedicated to ibogaine that has ever taken place. There is no way to easily capture the enormous experience of attending this event.

One prominent theme among attendees and presenters was the contrast between medical model ibogaine clinics, with MDs and RNs on staff, and the lay-provider model, where detoxes are facilitated mostly by former addicts. The split between the medical/academic folks and the heroin-user/lay-provider contingent was evident, though generally cordial, throughout the conference.

Of the panels I attended, one of the most interesting was “Perspectives On Plant Intelligence” by Ken

Alper, Dennis McKenna, Luis Eduardo Luna, and Dimitri Mugianis. McKenna expounded on the intense density of information occurring at the molecular level in the signal transduction networks of the plant kingdom. Alper delivered a brilliant presentation on plant decision-making processes (such as how climbing vines figure out the best

**There is no way to easily capture the enormous experience of attending this event.**

way to grow) and the effect of iboga on human learning and freedom of choice. Luna provided a scholarly perspective on plant intelligence and personhood, contrasting the lack of reverence for botanical wisdom long held by scientific authorities with the animistic traditions of indigenous shamanism.

Finally, Dimitri Mugianis gave a blisteringly charismatic talk on the “character” of iboga as he sees it, looking at those this plant spirit draws to its bosom. Dimitri’s point was that while other plant spirits (say, ayahuasca) seem to attract doctors, lawyers, and tech-folk (his assertion), by contrast iboga seems to manifest a distinct preference for the down-and-out and the oppressed—from drug addicts in NYC to the Gabonese freedom-fighters taking shelter with the Pygmies while fighting for independence from the French.

Norma Lotsof with a Conference Attendee.



Among the pressing issues brought up was the terrible peril the iboga plant itself is in. As worldwide interest in the medicine grows, demand has skyrocketed, leading to intense poaching. In the words of one of the conference panelists “We are in danger of loving it to death.”

This was addressed in one of the most controversial panels, “Ethnobotany of Ibogaine & Alternative Production Methods”. Presenter Chris Jenks (famous for creating the first practical, non-toxic ibogaine alkaloid extraction process, which reduced the price of ibogaine and helped expand the ibogaine-assisted medical detox movement) talked about the synthesis pathway he worked out to produce ibogaine from *Voacanga africana* (not endangered!). McKenna and Eduardo Jovel discussed the work they are doing up at the University of British Columbia using transgenic techniques to make “hairy-root” cultures of *T. iboga*, which, if perfected, could provide an alternate source for iboga, rather than sourcing it directly from the wild.

Sitting on the same panel was Yann Guignon, a French resident of Gabon who excoriated everyone in the room who had ever taken iboga without knowing the Bwiti-given name of the specific plant whose bark their medicine came from. In Guignon’s view, the ibogaine community, having depleted iboga in the wild, is turning its back on Gabon. He believes that the first duty of anyone who has benefited from iboga is to give back, directly, to Gabon and the Gabonese people.

Once Guignon threw down the gauntlet, things got pretty tense and post-colonial fairly quickly. By the end of the Q&A, wherein Guignon pointed the damning finger of biopiracy

directly at McKenna and Jovel, poor Dr. Jovel stood there with tears in his eyes, passionately asserting his commitment to the preservation of the plant. Speaking as an indigenous El Salvadorian who had known violence and exile, and as one who regularly participates not only in the conventional

idiosyncratic gathering of people it represented. By the end, most felt the program had fulfilled its promise that “The conversations that will take place here will shape the future of ibogaine therapy and research internationally.”

For many participants it resembled nothing less than an enormous family



Iboga Extract—Photo courtesy ICEERS Foundation

“scientific” paradigm but also quite seriously in indigenous practices, Dr. Jovel was not quite sure how he fit into the narrative of an evil corporate scientist out to screw over the earth for a buck.

Like most conferences on psychedelics, this one drew attendees

**Difficult issues were brought up, and more than a few panels had people practically in tears.**

ranging from world-class geniuses to the certifiably insane. It was the kind of conference where your roommate might invite two carloads of people over to your hotel to burn their skin with exotic frog toxins. Among the most palpable of the conference’s many qualities was the collective astonishment at what a unique and

reunion—albeit of one of the strangest families ever united by a common tree (or in this case, shrub). The event closed with a bangin’ party, in which distinguished faculty from the NYU School of Medicine threw down on the dance floor, shoulder to shoulder with former addicts turned initiated medicine-men

(which seemed to sum up the whole experience for me). The party raged until the power abruptly went out, at which point people gathered around a fire. Those who had been to Gabon brought out traditional

Bwiti instruments and taught iboga songs to those who had not.

The next morning folks dispersed back out into the world at large, melting into the anonymous crowds at Mexico City airport, where no one had the faintest idea what we’d been up to and they wouldn’t believe us if we told them. ○



## *Coffea arabica*



*Coffea arabica* Tree—Photo by Erowid



*Coffea arabica* Flower—Photo by Erowid



Unroasted Coffee Beans—Photo by Erowid

## Opioid Harm Reduction Project

In 2015, we began collaborating with medical toxicologists Lewis Nelson, Jeanmarie Perrone, Rachel Wightman, and Zachary Meisel. Based on discussions about potential improvements to Erowid’s opioid information, the toxicologists secured a \$5K grant from the American College of Medical Toxicology to enhance the opioid vaults. The Enhancing Targeted Opioid Harm Reduction Efforts (ETOHRE) project sprang from that grant. This effort is in response to the troubling and complex US epidemic of opioid-related problems (including addiction, overdose, and death) that distinguish this class of drugs from most others described on Erowid.

The first year of this project focused on evaluating what type of educational information is needed and beginning the development of content. During this phase, we conducted four surveys to gain an understanding of traffic to Erowid’s opioid pages, the demographics of our visitors, and the contours of visitors’ knowledge and use of opioids.

Survey answers are helping to shape the harm reduction materials the team is drafting. We’re creating documents broadly relevant to the wide array of available opioids as well as focusing on some of the most well known: oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, tramadol, heroin, fentanyl, and opium. As an example of our findings, around 75% of Erowid visitors surveyed said they had used an opioid either medically or recreationally during their life.

We are creating a new Erowid page type for “Risks”. It will integrate multiple nuanced viewpoints on opioids from those with experience in emergency departments, drug treatment, drug use, and drug education, designed to address issues broadly enough to be useful to those who are considering taking an opioid for the first time and those who have used them many times.

The group has delved deeply into the relative merits of different styles of warnings. We are also working on methods for evaluating the effectiveness of and preferences for different types of risk information and how to increase the number of at-risk people who read about health issues, without triggering “warning fatigue”.

It’s increasingly accepted that first-person narratives are more engaging and carry more weight with many readers than plainly stated medical warnings. So, we’re excerpting experience reports and featuring natural-language descriptions of the risks of opioid use, notably physical dependence, withdrawal, addiction, and overdose.

The ETOHRE group has had two abstracts about the project published in the medical literature, and we expect additional findings will be generated in 2016. ○



## Erowid in Person

Erowid receives a lot of requests to speak at events. Despite being chronically busy, we try to make at least two in-the-flesh presentations each year and attend one other conference or professional gathering.

Sometimes it's hard to measure the value of impacting more people through online information against the value of having "higher bandwidth" face-to-face exchanges. We learn something new at every event we attend, and people often tell us that they learn from our presentations. At one recent conference of knowledgeable psychedelic-oriented multidisciplinary experts, we gave an up-to-the-minute romp through the crazy world of new psychoactive substances (NPS). The level of surprise expressed by the well-informed attendees at the proliferation of NPS was a reminder that different settings provide unique learning and teaching opportunities. ○

## Drug Identifying and Measuring

In late July, we gave a talk on the basics of dose measurement at an event sponsored by the Women's Visionary Congress, the San Francisco Psychedelic Society, and the Internet Archive. What does 1 milligram of powder look like? How about 10 mg, 100 mg, or 1 gram? This presentation was designed to remind people that order-of-magnitude errors with drug dosages can kill, and to equip them with knowledge to help prevent such errors. We demonstrated using milligram scales and simple volumetric liquid measurement techniques essential for anyone who finds themselves around white powders. We also discussed the uses and limitations of field reagent testing kits to reduce risks from misidentified drugs. ○

## New Yorker Profile Reverberations

In recognition of Erowid's 20th year in operation, *The New Yorker* magazine published a "light profile" of Earth and Fire in their "Letters from California" series. Since the November 23, 2015 issue first appeared, the number of requests we've received for phone, radio, and podcast interviews has increased substantially.

The *New Yorker* article left a lot of interesting commentary on the cutting-room floor. The author, Emily Witt, conducted a dozen interviews with global experts who praised the Erowid project and vision, but little of that "background" made it into the article. Some of the people who were quoted said that their most definitive statements about Erowid's benefit to society were left out, presumably to make room for a few dissenting voices.

We're hopeful that a future article in another publication might go deeper into the roots, background, philosophy, and positive impact Erowid and its drug geek colleagues have had. ○



## ECSTASYDATA.ORG PROJECT

PERCENTAGE OF TESTED ECSTASY/MOLLY SAMPLES CONTAINING MDMA ONLY

50%

2016	Avg Page Hits Per Day	14,704		
	Avg File Hits Per Day	425,565		
	Daily Viewers	5,651		
	Year-To-Date Samples Tested	293		
2015	Total Samples Tested	528	<b>Results Published</b> (including all partner labs)	
	Non-Ecstasy Samples	276	2015-2016	1,094
	Ecstasy/Molly Samples	252	2010-2014	1,495
	MDMA Only	124 (49%)	2005-2009	437
	MDMA + Other	35 (14%)	2000-2004	1,265
	Something Else	89 (35%)	1996-1999	102
	Nothing	4 (2%)		



## EXPERIENCE REPORTS

Published Reports	25,460
Fully Triageed Reports	39,014
Partially Triageed Reports	845
Untriageed Reports	19,991
Rejected Reports	22,997

TOTAL EXPERIENCE REPORTS COLLECTED

108,853

Submitted Each Day	6.2
Published in the Last Year	1,356
Active Triagers/Reviewers	28



## EROWID CONTENT

DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED ON EROWID.ORG

123,139

Experience Reports	25,460
Articles & Information Pages	19,449
References	8,596
Photographs, Images, & Art	7,933
Archived Site Pages	61,701

# VERBATIM

**“To sustain longevity, you have to evolve.”**

— Aries Spears (b. 1975)

**“If you don’t know history, then you don’t know anything. You are a leaf that doesn’t know it is part of a tree.”**

— Michael Crichton (1942–2008)

**“Study the past if you would define the future.”**

— Confucius (551–479 BCE)

**“Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists.”**

— Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945)

**“That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons that history has to teach.”**

— Aldous Huxley (1894–1963)

**“History never looks like history when you are living through it.”**

— John W. Gardner (1912–2002)

**“The soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts.”**

— Marcus Aurelius (121–180)

**“In making the great experiment of governing people by consent rather than by coercion, it is not sufficient that the party in power should have a majority. It is just as necessary that the party in power should never outrage the minority.”**

— Walter Lippmann (1889–1974)

**“What characterizes a member of a minority group is that he is forced to see himself as both exceptional and insignificant, marvelous and awful, good and evil.”**

— Norman Mailer (1923–2007)

**“I would be better for me [...] that multitudes of men should disagree with me rather than that I, being one, should be out of harmony with myself and contradict me.”**

— Plato (~428–348 BCE)

**“The one self-knowledge worth having is to know one’s own mind.”**

— Francis H. Bradley (1846–1924)

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atzeman  
daiteke,  
aldi galdua  
berriz ez*

[ The lost sheep may be recovered, lost time cannot. ]

— Basque Proverb

**“It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation.”**

— John Stuart Mill (1806–1873)

**“Self-correction begins with self-knowledge.”**

— Baltasar Gracián (1601–1658)

**“Your identity changes with how you perceive reality.”**

— Vithu Jeyaloganathan (b. 1991)

**“Most anarchists believe the coming change can only come through a revolution, because the possessing class will not allow a peaceful change to take place; still we are willing to work for peace at any price, except at the price of liberty.”**

— Lucy Parsons (1853–1942)

**“Every revolution was first a thought in one man’s mind; and when the same thought occurs to another man, it is the key to that era.”**

— Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)

**“Knowing others is wisdom. Knowing oneself is enlightenment.”**

— Laozi (~6th century BCE)

**“People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something one finds, it is something one creates.”**

— Thomas Szasz (1920–2012)

**“Everything you see or hear or experience in any way at all is specific to you. You create a universe by perceiving it, so everything in the universe you perceive is specific to you.”**

— Douglas Adams (1952–2001)

**“It is one of the commonest of mistakes to consider that the limit of our power of perception is also the limit of all there is to perceive.”**

— C. W. Leadbeater (1854–1934)

**“Growth is an erratic forward movement: two steps forward, one step back. Remember that and be very gentle with yourself.”**

— Julia Cameron (b. 1948)

**“Only in growth, reform, and change, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found.”**

— Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906–2001)